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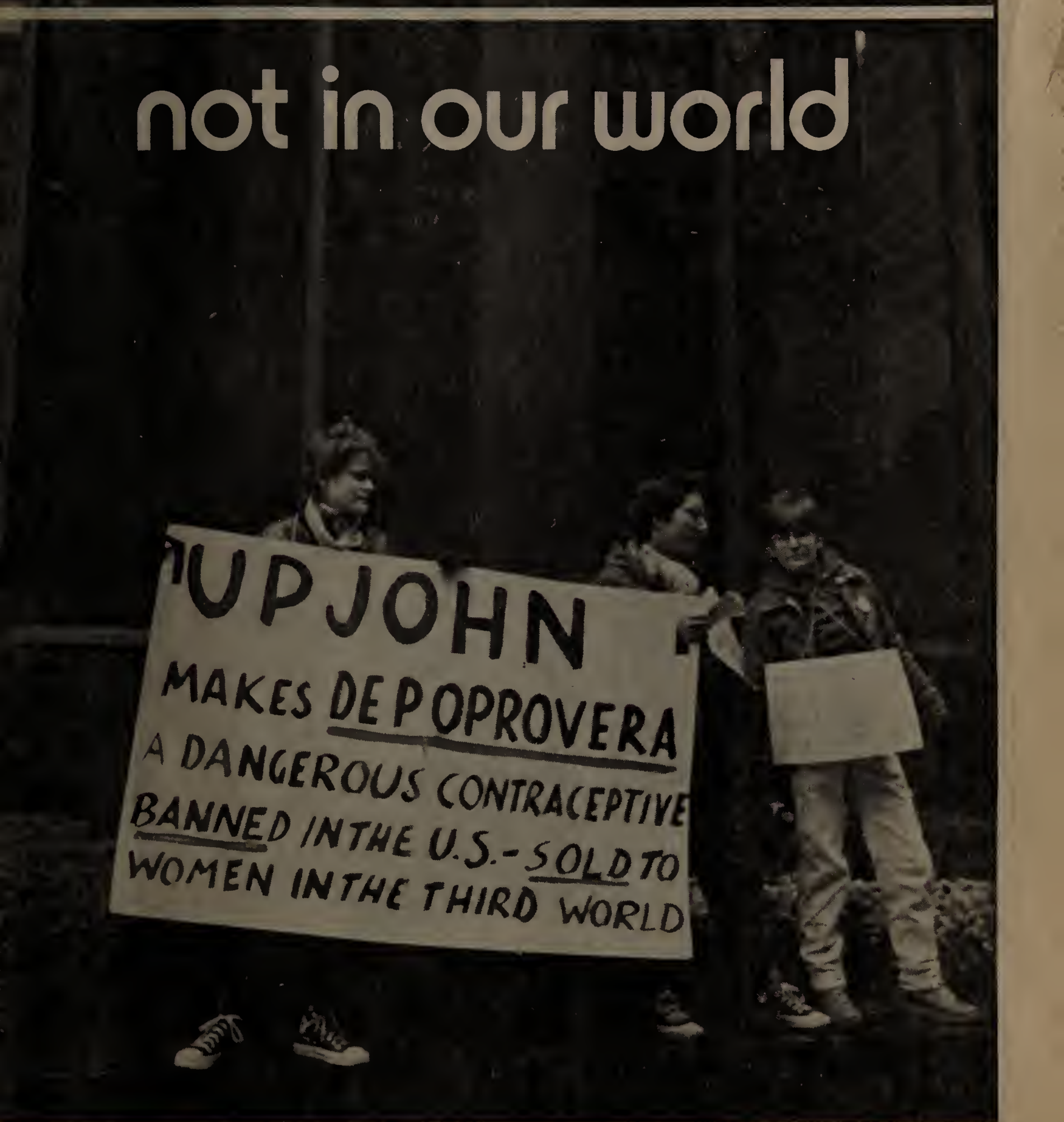
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GayCommunity News

THE WEEKLY FOR LESBIANS AND GAY MALES

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not in our world



SHUT UP JOHN
MAKES DE P O P O V E R A
A DANGEROUS CONTRACEPTIVE
BANNED IN THE U.S. - SOLD TO
WOMEN IN THE THIRD WORLD

GayCommunityNews

Vol. 12, No. 21

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December 8, 1984

'I'm Not Kissing Passengers'

United Not Friendly To Workers With AIDS

By Christine Guilfooy

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — United Airlines has placed two male flight attendants on medical leave because they have AIDS and company officials refused comment on the allegation that they are considering testing their flight attendants for AIDS infectivity.

The two attendants, Gar Traynor and Bruce Hall, were placed on medical leave after they informed their employer they had been diagnosed as having AIDS. Although the airline told them it took such action because they might spread the disease in their capacity as food handlers, neither was offered a transfer to other departments.

John Lorenzini, the director of People with AIDS, San Francisco, told GCN he had an unconfirmed report that United had "attempted to require a lymphadenopathy test on all male flight attendants."

When Joel Hopkins, of United Airlines, was asked if they were

going to test for AIDS infectivity or if they had discussed the possibility, he replied, "No comment."

United did not offer Traynor another position when he was placed on medical leave. Traynor, who is 37, told GCN he was a United employee for ten years and it was his career. When Traynor was diagnosed with AIDS in December 1982, he informed United because he needed to arrange his work schedule around chemotherapy. Traynor said he worked a full schedule for six months following his diagnosis. "Everything was fine for six months [but] in June 1983 I was called in and told 'effective immediately' I was on medical leave of absence. I would retain my insurance and partial flight benefits, but no salary. There was no discussion." Traynor said the loss of salary led him to lose his apartment, his savings and his car.

Bruce Hall was diagnosed with

AIDS in September 1983 and missed work until January 1984 when he asked for reinstatement but was refused.

United claims that both Hall and Traynor are potential health risks to the public. They also said that working in the closed environment of an airline cabin would leave them vulnerable to more infections. United also doubted their ability to carry full schedules, although Traynor told GCN he had no difficulty in this regard.

Traynor obtained a statement from his physician, Ronald Mitsuyasu of the UCLA Medical Center, in July 1983 which said in part, "Mr. Traynor has had no significant infections while under our care and has been fully functional in terms of his daily activities.... [H]e has no apparent medical limitations which should prevent him from performing his work responsibilities or his usual activities of daily living."

Traynor said his union, the Association of Flight Attendants, "has been 100 percent behind me." Traynor instituted a grievance procedure through the union and his case was heard before an arbitrator in June. To date, no decision has been announced. Traynor said he also has filed a \$20 million civil suit which he says he will drop if United will reinstate him.

Marilyn Pearson, who is handling Traynor's case for the union, said, "The medical community has a consensus that people with AIDS (PWAs) should be able to work unless their individual condi-

tion warrants [otherwise]. Our position is that [United] created a blanket policy [on PWAs]. There is no basis for that, you have to look at the individual case."

Hall took his case to the Illinois Human Rights Commission and although it has not issued a ruling, United's Hopkins said a transfer request is in the works for Hall. Hopkins told GCN it is "still being pursued." He also said, however, that Hall's request would not be given special priority.

At Lorenzini's request, Marcus Conant, M.D., the director of the

Continued on page 3

Reflections On The 1984 Elections

By Sue Hyde

CAMBRIDGE, MA — Asking for an analysis of the 1984 elections can be a quick way to flush out party loyalists. At a November 28 forum entitled "Lesbian and Gay Perspectives on the 1984 Elections: Where Do We Go From Here?" two of the four panelists wasted no time in telling the 150 or so in the audience to consolidate power in the Democratic Party and to consolidate power in the Republican Party. But the other two invited speakers offered a more wide-ranging view of the post-election political landscape in the forum sponsored by the Kennedy Institute of Politics at Harvard University.

Forum moderator Eric Rofes introduced the evening's four speakers: Chris Riddiough, director of lesbian rights for the National Organization for Women (NOW); Gil Gerald, executive director of the National Coalition of Black Gays (NCBG); Robert Ebersole, town treasurer of Lunenburg, Mass. and a member of Concerned Americans for Individual Rights (CAIR); and Virginia Apuzzo, executive director of the National Gay Task Force (NGTF).

Democrat booster Chris Riddiough, NOW's lesbian rights director, offered the lesbian/gay turnout for Mondale as proof that the Democrats scored a success in their efforts to appeal to gay and lesbian voters. She cited a Chicago survey of 2000 gay and lesbian bar customers which indicated that 66 percent of the gay men and 80 percent of the lesbians surveyed had

voted for the Democratic ticket. She acknowledged the existence of a gender gap amongst gay men and lesbians, attributing it to differences in income and lesbians' more complete understanding of Reagan's sexism.

Riddiough called inter-party rumblings to "put it back on course" a thinly disguised agenda of appealing to white men again. She urged people to become involved in party politics and said, "The Democratic party won't be a majority party by writing off 40 percent of its supporters, — blacks, women, gays and labor."

Gil Gerald, executive director of the NCBG, credited Jesse Jackson's vocal and singular support of lesbian/gay rights with paving the way for other black politicians to do likewise. He quoted Willie Kennedy, a black woman incumbent who retained her seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, saying she came out for lesbian/gay rights following Jackson's lead.

But Gerald veered away from party politics and addressed grassroots economic issues and coalition building. "A booming economy," he said, "does not benefit those at the bottom."

Citing the Reagan administration's hostility to civil rights issues and social programs affecting poor people and disenfranchised groups, Gerald said one goal for the gay movement should be to build alliances with black groups that influence public opinion in urban areas, such as black business

groups, black social and professional organizations and black religious groups.

"We must find the courage to speak out as a community against the oppression felt by blacks and other people of color," Gerald said. "The era should end when lesbians and gay men can get away with saying they can't afford to speak out against apartheid [in South Africa]."

Robert Ebersole, standing in for former Maryland Congressman Robert Bauman who was unable to attend due to family problems,

Continued on page 7

Sanitized Baths Reopen in Bay Area

By Christine Guilfooy

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — A decision has been handed down by Superior Court Judge Roy Wonder, lifting the temporary injunction which closed the baths and other commercial sex establishments on October 15. In his November 28 order, Wonder said the establishments may reopen under the following conditions:

- Private rooms cannot be rented or operated without a hotel license;
- Doors must be removed from private rooms and booths;
- There must be at least one employee whose only job it is to observe sexual activity on premises;
- Employees must patrol the establishment every ten minutes to ascertain if "unsafe

sexual activities" are taking place;

- Employees must expel patrons engaging in high risk sexual activity;

- There must be at least one such employee for every twenty patrons;

- Operators must work to educate patrons about safe sexual practices "including but not limited to that suggested by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation;"

- Violators will be given five days to "cure" violations or they may be liable to prosecution to the fullest extent of the law;

- The order must be posted in each room and hallway and will remain in effect until the director of public health declares the AIDS epidemic over.

— filed from Boston

Cincinnatians Nervous About Confidentiality

By John Zelt

CINCINNATI — The same week in which two experts at the city health department warned gay men not to risk breached confidentiality by taking the new blood test for AIDS antibodies, a report on city efficiency raised questions about the security of information about patients with sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs).

Hoxworth Blood Center here expects to use the government-approved test early next year to identify potential donors who have antibodies to HTLV-III, the suspected cause of AIDS. Antibodies are produced by the body to fight viruses. Their presence does not always mean the patient is infected with a virus while absence does not mean the person is not infected.

The motives of blood bank operators may be just, but their attempt to protect the nation's blood supply could prove hazardous in other ways, according to Dr. Ronn Rucker, clinical sociologist at the city's STD Clinic. Rucker was guest speaker at a meeting of the Greater Cincinnati Gay/Lesbian Coalition (GCGLC).

He said he and STD clinic director Michael Ritchey fear gay men may volunteer to donate blood on-

ly to obtain test results, risking exposure of others when the test is not yet reliable.

Hoxworth director Dr. Tibor Greenwalt has said that its lists of potential donors will remain confidential and said use of the test results by employers or health insurers "sounds illegal to me."

But in the long run and at other test sites, Dr. Rucker told GCGLC members, there may be "no assurance of confidentiality." Dr. Michael Mavroidis, a psychiatrist who is president of AIDS Volunteers of Cincinnati, said that since "records can be subpoenaed" he agrees with Rucker's advice. One Coalition officer said he "will not donate blood if Hoxworth keeps records."

A recommendation that STD Clinic files be added to the health department's computerized accounts-receivable lists was part of a "Report on City Operations" released by the Chamber of Commerce and Cincinnati Business Committee.

The report acknowledged that "confidentiality is a critical issue," but said that "the automation could result in savings from the elimination of clerical positions." It urged the city to

evaluate security measures which would guarantee patient confidentiality but still allow automation. The report did not project potential savings or even mention revenues recouped by billing.

GCN learned that STD Clinic Director Ritchey — on his own initiative — had developed a plan to recover as much as \$50,000 for currently unbilled services, using the city's computer without violating confidences.

City residents who can pay a token \$10 test fee (\$20 for out-of-towners) contribute about \$50,000 a year to the Clinic's budget, Ritchey said, estimating computerized billing could double that figure. The current manual system cannot be used to collect from third-party insurers, he said. "Entering our patients in the health department Data Center is a more orderly way of accounting for patients' visits."

Unlike the system used by other city clinics, names will not be coded with any diagnostic information, Ritchey told GCN. "There will be no coding for STD patients entered into the computer."

As of late November, 20 cases of AIDS have been logged here in Ritchey's twice-locked files.



Brian Quinby

News Notes

quote of the week

"All American liberties depend upon freedom of expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment. That cannot mean free speech only for recognizably 'political' arguments. Politics evolves from life, economics and art, from social experiment, literature, entertainment. Freedom only for narrowly defined 'political' discourse is no freedom at all...."

"The first appropriate defense against offensive speech is avoiding it, turning out, turning away. The proper and constitutional action against offensive speech is criticism, protest, boycott — not less speech, but more."

— New York *Times* editorial, November 19, 1984.

mass. aids

BOSTON — A state conference on AIDS in Massachusetts will be held on Monday, Dec. 3, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Department of Public Health, 150 Tremont, Boston. Sponsored by the Governor's Task Force on AIDS and the Department of Public Health, it is intended to update the public and the health care community on the current status of AIDS in Massachusetts.

Dr. Donald Armstrong, chief of the Infectious Disease Control Service of Memorial Sloane Kettering Institute for Cancer Research, will deliver the keynote speech, providing an overview of AIDS and related issues and the problems and progress in understanding this disease.

Other speakers will address the social and economic needs of AIDS patients, the HTLV-III virus, and the clinical spectrum of AIDS. Additional speakers include Larry Kessler of the AIDS Action Committee; State Rep. Tom Vallety; and Ken Mayer, M.D., medical director of the Fenway Community Health Center.

The conference is free and open to the public.

holiday food bank

BOSTON — The AIDS Action Committee has announced the opening of a Holiday Food Bank to benefit people with AIDS. The Committee seeks donations of canned goods, non-perishable food items, and toiletries to help supplement the incomes of people with AIDS, many of whom must rely on food stamp allowances and Social Security benefits to survive. The Committee suggests that shoppers pick up an extra can of tuna, box of instant breakfast, or can of shaving cream and deposit it in AAC drop-off points throughout the city.

The AAC will set up a drop-off box at the Boston Gay Men's Chorus Holiday Concert on Dec. 9 at Jordan Hall. For more information on drop-off points and gift suggestions, call the AIDS Action Hotline at 536-7733.

women's commission

BOSTON — Mayor Raymond Flynn has announced the appointment of Massachusetts Gay Political Caucus co-chair Martha Jones to the city's new Women's Commission.

Appearing at a November 28 Parkman House press conference, Flynn introduced the appointees, among them his advisor on women's issues, Alana Murphy. The commissioners, Flynn said, will advise him on matters concerning jobs, housing and "affordable and safe daycare."

"If there is one belief that is basic to Mayor Flynn's philosophy, that is equality," said Murphy. "Mayor Flynn believes strongly that men and women should be equal." Murphy cited as an example Flynn's commitment to ending sexual exploitation and pornography in the Combat Zone.

The other women named to the commission are: Lorraine Morin of Jamaica Plain, a day care activist and teacher at Cathedral grammar school, who will serve as the commission's chairperson; Joyna Bozzotto of East Boston, affiliated with School Volunteers for Boston and the Harborside Community School Council; Elizabeth G. Cook of the Waterfront, executive director of the Advertising Club of Greater Boston; Ann Eldridge of Mission Hill, an attorney and past president of Rosie's Place; Lee Fremont-Smith of the Back Bay, executive director of Transitional Employment Enterprises, Inc.; Carolyn Gritter of the South End, president of the Ellis Neighborhood Association; Cecilia Hunt of West Roxbury, director of Esculeita Agueybana, a South End child development center; Janice Kenneally of West Roxbury, a director of Parkway Boys' Club; Jane Leung of Chinatown, executive director of Boston Youth Essential Services; Kristen McCormack of Dorchester, steering committee member of the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus; Angela Menino of Hyde Park, founding member of Ohrenberger Community School Council; Patricia Nickerson of South Boston, a member of the Tynan Community School Council; and Ann Stokes of Roxbury, a social worker with United South End Settlements.

no aids ward

NEWARK, NJ — By a three to one margin, the citizens of Newark rejected a plan to open a prison ward in the city for prisoners with AIDS, according to Newark *Star-Ledger*. The vote on the ballot question, "Do you want prison inmates who are AIDS victims from throughout the state of New Jersey housed in the city of Newark?" was 26,060 against and 9347 in favor.

West Ward Councilman Ronald Rice, who proposed the citywide referendum on the issue, called the vote "a victory for the people's position."

But an official of the state correctional system said plans for the center had been scrapped months ago. Gary Hilton, assistant state commissioner of corrections, said, "It is about as definite as anything can be definite that the Department of Corrections will not open an AIDS center in Newark."

He added, "Anytime there is a public vote, that certainly has to be a factor in planning."

fighting the firefighters

SAN FRANCISCO — The man who was the victim of a physical assault by five San Francisco firemen at a restaurant on October 20 has filed a \$250,000 suit against the city, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*.

William K. Moore, who is not gay, alleges that the firemen taunted him with anti-gay remarks and then punched him repeatedly in the face. Moore says he acted to protect himself and did not attack the firefighters in any way.

The five firefighters have been disciplined — three with suspensions, two with formal reprimands — and two face charges of battery. Also still pending is a police probe of the officers called to quell the melee. The officers refused to enter the restaurant or interview witnesses, and when taken to the nearby firehouse, refused to arrest suspects identified by the victim.

long overdue

SACRAMENTO, CA — A man who says he was harassed out of his job as a prison guard after officials learned he was gay has been awarded nearly \$25,000 in damages from the state Department of Corrections, according to the *Sacramento Bee*. Department officials have also agreed to "issue a policy statement asserting the department's commitment to non-discrimination against lesbians and gay men."

Gerald LaFevre, 32, said his troubles began in mid-1982 after corrections officials learned he had been a victim of an assault and attempted robbery involving a suspect LaFevre met in a gay bar in Santa Cruz. LaFevre said his supervisors ordered agents of the department's special services unit to conduct an investigation into his background and off-duty lifestyle.

At that point, LaFevre identified himself as a homosexual and was then interrogated several times by agents who "made it seem that I was the criminal instead of the victim" in the Santa Cruz incident.

"They also had agents following me, staking out my house, checking into my private life," LaFevre said. "They interviewed former employers, they interviewed my friends, they interviewed people who came by my house, they interviewed all the parolees that had been in my charge when I was a parole officer."

"Then they doubled my workload to where it was almost impossible to get my job done. Finally after almost three months of that harassment, I transferred to a job with another [state] agency."

Under terms of the settlement, LaFevre will receive \$24,710.50 in damages and the department has agreed "to provide training statewide to all its managers and supervisors on how to develop and maintain a work environment that is free of discrimination — with an emphasis on sexual orientation."

A deputy attorney general working on the case said the department's agreement to train employees to become sensitive about sexual preference was "long overdue."

pressing records

BOSTON — Two American records were set in the bench press at the Amazon-Adonis Powerlift III held at the South End Gym on November 11.

Cat Chase set a record on the women's 165-pound division with a bench press of 185 pounds. Sue Elwyn benched 162½ pounds to move the record up in the women's 114-pound class. Elwyn won the women's division with lifts totalling 725 pounds.

Andy Klapper won the men's division with a 345-pound squat, a 190-pound bench press and a 430-pound deadlift for a 965 pound total.

And the audience set its own record by being the largest yet to turn out for a South End gym meet. All lifters were certified by affidavit and polygraph to be steroid free.

dronenberg rehearing denied

WASHINGTON, DC — The 11-member Court of Appeals here has refused to review a decision upholding a former Navy petty officer's discharge for having sex with another seaman, according to the Washington *Blade*.

The November 15 ruling lets stand the opinion written last August by Circuit Judge Robert Bork in the case of former petty officer James Dronenberg. Bork contended that Dronenberg and gay people in or out of the military do not have a constitutional right to private, consensual sexual relations.

Bork wrote that "a right to homosexual conduct is [not] 'fundamental' or 'implicit in the concept of ordered liberty' unless any and all private sexual behavior falls within those categories...."

Four judges dissented with the majority opinion not to review the case and charged the original three-judge panel with writing "a twelve-page attack on the right to privacy," and faulted the panel for substituting "its own doctrinal preferences for the constitutional principles established by the Supreme Court."

what now?

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA — A conference organized by the Charlottesville Lesbian Feminists was cancelled after a facility near here reneged on its agreement to rent space for the gathering, according to *Our Own*.

The decision by the Sevenoaks Pathwork Center in Madison came just one week before the October 26-28 conference was to begin. The center's director said the local advertising of the conference as a "Central Virginia Lesbian Convention" had prompted an "intense" local reaction. The director refused to elaborate on the specific complaints, but the Charlottesville Lesbian Feminists said Sevenoaks officials "have given us every reason to believe that the cancellation was prompted by fears that their land use permit would be jeopardized by hosting a group that is controversial."

The conference organizer said the group may sue Sevenoaks for breach of contract and that Sevenoaks "should compensate us for our losses."

In any event, the conference cancellation leaves unanswered its thematic question, "What Do We Do Now?"

anti-porn law ruled unconstitutional

INDIANAPOLIS — A local ordinance defining pornography as a form of sex discrimination was declared unconstitutional on November 19 by a federal court judge here, according to the New York *Times*.

Judge Sara Evans Barker said the anti-porn law violates free speech. Supporters of the bill say they will appeal Barker's ruling to the Seventh Court of Appeals in Chicago. Barker's decision is the first court test of the radical feminist civil rights approach to censorship of pornography.

Barker ruled that the ordinance specifically restricts the sale and distribution of pornography which violates the First Amendment right of free speech.

Richard Kammem, the attorney for the American Booksellers Association, one of the groups challenging the law, said he believes it is unlikely the law can be written to make it constitutional.

Barker also ruled against the city's argument that this form of sex discrimination is of such compelling interest to the state that it warrants exception to the First Amendment.

response to discrimination

SEATTLE — This city's chapter of Black and White Men Together instituted a Discrimination Response System (DSR) to combat instances of discrimination within the gay and lesbian community. According to a press release, this discrimination could be based on race, color, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, physical differences or other attributes.

Following the receipt of a complaint concerning discrimination, a DSR staffperson conducts an interview with the complainant. After the interview, the course of action is chosen depending on the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the complainant. In some cases, negotiation and mediation with the offending party may be arranged; while in other cases, the complainant may be referred to a governmental agency. A pool of volunteer lawyers is being organized to assist in cases involving litigation.

A \$1092 grant from the Fund for Human Dignity and Black and White Men Together/Washington, D.C. is funding the project. The Seattle chapter joins chapters in Atlanta, Chicago, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Youngstown, OH in setting up the projects.

Similar projects already exist in Washington, D.C., New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. To contact the Seattle Discrimination Response System, call (206) 322-2777.

Not In Our World

Lesbians, Feminists Take It To Wall Street

By Loie Hayes

NEW YORK — Nearly 1000 lesbians and feminist women from around the East Coast gathered in New York City on Nov. 18 and 19 for a demonstration entitled Not In Our Name (NION). The protest was designed to expose the "powerful white men in corporations, the military, government and other institutions [who] make decisions that perpetuate the war on us all." The range of issues addressed during the two-day protest included anti-militarism, women's liberation, Central American solidarity, anti-racism, socialism and environmentalism and was comprehensive, if not always explicit.

News Commentary

Initiated by the Women's Pentagon Action (WPA) and other feminist anti-militarist groups, the demonstration resembled WPA protests in Nov. 1980 and 1981 at the Pentagon. It opened with an energetic and eye-catching march Sunday, which swelled to 800 to 900 women at its peak, and this was followed by a direct action blockade of the Stock Exchange on Monday by 150 to 250 women trained in non-violent civil disobedience (CD). Police made 104 arrests during the blockade.

Ellie Rosenberg, an experienced CDer from Boston, summed up her impressions of the action with these words: "It was great to see all the girls again. And Wall Street was the right place. We were confronting the right people, really confronting them, making them struggle to get into work, making them think about what they do for work."

The most novel aspect of the NION action was the decision to target the economic complex of Wall Street rather than the military headquarters at the Pentagon. While the literature produced for the event consistently protested misuse of corporate "profit" rather than the entire system of capitalism and never named socialism as a strategy to confront "business as usual," it was frequently informative and accessible, rather than simply rhetorical. The change of location indicates a more materialist analysis and a step away from the mainstream disarmament movement.

Sunday's march route included brief stops at CitiCorp, the largest U.S. multi-national bank investing in South Africa's apartheid government; General Electric, the seventh largest exporter of U.S. weapons; Upjohn, manufacturer of the contraceptive Depo-Provera, illegal in the U.S. but marketed widely in the Third World; and the publisher Harper and Row, where union-busting tactics have left employees without a contract since May 1983.

The march sported a host of skeleton puppets, a drum contingent, many colorful banners and lifesize cartoon figures of corporate businessmen and Reagans mouthing platitudes. The protesters kept up a steady flow of humorous and affectionate songs, in addition to a disparate collection of both well-worn chants and originals like "baseball, apple pie, napalm, CIA." Many of the chants and songs specified lesbianism as a primary source of pleasure and activism for the protesters. Jo Ellen Childers, a NION activist, described the organizing group as "overwhelmingly lesbian."



Ellen Shup

In a printed statement distributed during the demonstration, the women disclaimed nuclear weapons; conventional warfare in Central America, the Caribbean and the Middle East; apartheid in South Africa; labor exploitation in the U.S. and the Third World; cuts in social services; and environmental degradation as "not in our name." "We women come together to reject the lie that these corporations and the government and military policies that support them, are in our interest or for our own good."

To avoid simply being a litany of victimization, the leaflet recounted a diversity of tactics women have used to fight back against "abuse." Oppressive "attitudes and behaviors" were also addressed in the NION statement, which condemned "discrimination on the basis of sex, race, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, age, class, ap-

pearance and nationality." The statement identified the organizers as women and feminists, though it neglected to acknowledge the high percentage of lesbians involved in the action.



Marjlin Humphries

Controversy as to how a group of almost exclusively white, educated, lesbian-feminists in their 20s could create an accessible, multi-cultural demonstration arose some weeks before the protest. With much internal discussion, the organizers weighed the desire to encourage a diversity of women to feel included in the demonstration against "the problem of attempting to speak for those who are not represented among us," to quote Boston NION's response to a widely circulated letter to NION from two Jewish women charging anti-Semitism. (See GCN, Vol. 12, No. 18 for complete texts of both letters.)

While organizers worked to be more specific about who they actually were, their final identifying statement remained vague: "Some of us in addition to being women in a male-dominated society, are also victims of oppressions based on one or more of these categories [quoted above]." Julie Ogletree commented to GCN that while the organizers were almost exclusively white and lesbian, and many were Jewish, these characteristics were most often neglected in the literature produced.

If the leaflet was vague on the racial composition of the organizing group, the speakers headlining the rally after Sunday's march gave graphic, if token, evidence of organizers' anti-racist intentions. Three women of color, a Salvadoran from the FMLN women's organization, a Black South African from the African National Congress women's group, and a Black American from the Coalition to Save Medgar Evers College, addressed the predominantly white crowd.

Other speakers at Sunday's rally discussed war tax resistance; the clerical and technical workers strike at Yale University; women's peace camps; the killing by police of Eleanor Bumpurs, a 67-year-old Bronx woman; the Puerto Rican independence movement; and grand jury abuse. Music, poetry and a closing "ritual" of hugs rounded out the hour and a half long program.

The sit-in Monday began around 9 a.m. after a spirited march through the financial district and a skit dramatizing corporate and banking investment in Central American military dictatorships at the expense of U.S. jobs. Though police had set up sawhorses at all five entrances to the Stock Exchange, women sat down in the pathways left open by police and attempted to talk with stock traders and others as they stepped over, or pushed through, blockaders.

The blockade and arrests proceeded for two and a half hours without incident until one woman, arrested while attempting to block the adjacent street, jumped off the stretcher she was on and flailed her arms, saying, "Get your hands off me. I'll walk, I'll walk," to the swarm of police who handcuffed and hustled her onto the bus.

The circumstance of this woman's arrest, her being handcuffed and threatened with an extra charge of resisting arrest, prompted both principled support and personal criticism from her co-arrestees. Another point of political tension arose with the verbal and physical abuse meted out by the one Black female cop on one of the buses as she dragged women from the front of the bus to the back. Several angry exchanges broke out between the protesters and this officer.

In an unusually strong display of group solidarity and resistance to "unjust" prosecution, 78 of the 104 women arrested refused to identify themselves to police. By offering to release the women with summonses in any plausible name for future court dates, police tried to bribe the women into giving up their demand for immediate mass arraignment under the collective name Barbara Deming, in honor of the recently deceased lesbian non-violent activist.

The politics of non-cooperation, specifically not walking, was addressed at one point by the only Black woman among the protesters. Fighting back tears, she spoke of feeling torn between white protesters and the other prisoners, primarily Blacks and Latinas/os. Referring to the women with her, she said, "These are my sisters," and added while gesturing to two Black men in the adjacent cell, "but these are my brothers." She urged the protesters to "walk with dignity" as a way to acknowledge, rather than flaunt, their race and class privilege.

Earlier, some white protesters had been verbally and physically harassed by prostitutes who charged that the protest was slowing down their processing and that if they, the prostitutes, refused to walk, they would be beaten, rather than dragged, by the police. The prostitutes kicked two protesters who were lying in a hallway where they had been dragged. Discussion of white privilege in relation to civil disobedience and non-cooperation was cut short by police arriving to take the women to the courthouse. All 78 women walked after this point.



Once in courthouse holding cells, the women conferred with lawyers who acted as intermediaries, transferring to the judge and District Attorney the women's demands for mass arraignment and dismissal of the charges. Faced with such a large number of women refusing to identify themselves, the judge decided not to make good on the option which the women had been threatened with all day: Rikers Island, a notorious prison for women. Around midnight, the women got the good news that they had won a *de facto* dismissal from the judge; he had agreed to release them as "Jane Does" with future court dates, even though he had no names, addresses, fingerprints or photographs with which to track them down if they failed to reappear.

It was 2:30 a.m. when the last women were finally released. The day closed with an exuberant outburst of song just outside the doors of the courtroom, and a flurry of hugs and tears and more hugs.

As if the women didn't want to say goodbye too abruptly, evaluation meetings were scheduled at all levels of the organization. A nationwide evaluation and party will take place in Western Massachusetts on Dec. 8 and 9.

The songs and hugs symbolized the predominant character of this political action. Many of these women — relatively unschooled in political theory — have arrived at their politics by intuition as much as by analysis. Faced with the unprecedented reactionary destructiveness of the New Right in the last half decade, these women, who came of age in the "women's community," have responded to that threat with energetic organizing.

Those who have been actively developing a feminist anti-militarist politic have worked to blend feminist and pacifist, materialist and spiritualist, separatist, anarchist and mass movement ideologies. They are attempting to combine the autonomy of lesbian-feminism with the vision of a multi-cultural coalition. They want nothing less than a free society and a safe world. They make plans to survive the battle — and to have fun doing it.

United

Continued from page 1

AIDS Clinical Research Center of the University of California, San Francisco, wrote to United's Corporate Medical Director, Gary Kohn, M.D., saying in part "...the epidemiology of the disease suggests to us that this disease is transmitted in exactly the same way as hepatitis B.... [I]ndividuals who are known to be hepatitis B core antigen positive are allowed to work as health care providers, day care operators and food handlers. [H]ealth care providers who have

been caring for AIDS patients since the beginning of the epidemic show no signs of having contracted the disease."

Traynor told GCN, "I agree United should be cautious.... [But] flight attendants don't really handle food. The food is already pre-containerized. We handle wrapped utensils.... I realize HTLV-III is found in saliva but my saliva isn't a threat to passengers. I'm not kissing them."

Although the presence of

HTLV-III in saliva is a recent discovery, most researchers and epidemiologists agree it is an unlikely route of transmission.

John Lorenzini said job discrimination has become a real threat to people with AIDS and some tell their employers they have leukemia or cancer so they can go for treatments without losing their jobs. He said fear of AIDS and homophobia are realities that PWAs are forced to deal with.

Lorenzini said it is because of this that United has taken the actions it has. "If we were talking about Legionnaire's disease," he said, "United would be more informed, more willing to know the information before reacting."

Lorenzini has begun organizing a boycott of United and he says he has received support from the Stonewall, Milk and Alice B. Toklas Democratic clubs. "It's

important to get the information to the gay community. We can fly other airlines [although] I would prefer to have United change its position — I don't want to declare war on the company, I don't want this to be business versus the gay community."

— filed from Boston

Community Voices

GCN Job Openings

GCN is seeking applicants for the positions of News Editor, Local Reporter, and Advertising Manager to begin in late fall/early winter.

News Editor: Coordinate the news department; write or assign to other staff or volunteer writers articles of local and national/international interest; edit news copy; and lay out news pages each week. Develop and expand GCN's coverage of events and issues of concern to gays/lesbians of color. *Requirements:* Strong writing and editing skills; familiarity with gay/lesbian issues; and knowledge of racial and ethnic communities and concerns.

Local Reporter: Research and write news stories of interest to the Greater Boston lesbian and gay community on local movement and electoral politics; police, legal and legislative issues; and local media. Work collectively with other members of the news department and staff to coordinate GCN's news coverage. *Requirements:* Strong writing and investigative skills; familiarity with lesbian/gay and feminist issues and progressive political movements; familiarity with anti-racist politics; willingness to work collectively under deadline pressure.

Advertising Manager: Solicit and obtain revenue-producing ads and develop strategies for increased advertising. Send out monthly billings and conduct follow-up on delinquent accounts. *Requirements:* Strong organizational, interpersonal, and recordkeeping skills. Previous sales or related experience helpful.

These positions require a commitment to gay/lesbian liberation, feminism, social change, anti-racist politics, and the collective decision-making process.

Weekly salary for each position is \$150. Benefits include fully paid health insurance, three weeks' paid vacation, unlimited sick leave, and life insurance. To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to **no later than December 5, 1984 to:** Gordon Gottlieb, *Gay Community News*, 167 Tremont Street, 5th fl., Boston, MA 02111. Lesbians and gay men of color are particularly encouraged to apply.

gala party for a.a.c. scientific method

An open invitation to the community:

It is hard to imagine the hardships imposed when someone is stricken with AIDS. Homes are lost, jobs are lost, family and friends are lost, not to mention the anguish of trying to cope with a physical disease.

Please join Somerville/Medford Gay and Lesbian Alliance at the Randolph Country Club on December 16 at 5 p.m. for our Holiday Ball. Tickets are \$20, and proceeds will go to the AIDS Action Committee. The Committee will also be honored that night. Entertainment will be provided by Patti O'Kecfe. A choice of prime rib or baked stuffed shrimp will be available.

Many of our friends with AIDS have lost a lot. Especially during the holiday season, the GALAs of Somerville/Medford, Dorchester, North Shore, and Jamaica Plain and the Mass. Gay Political Caucus want to let them know that they haven't lost us.

Please join us.
Helena 625-3172
Bob 628-5875
Somerville, MA

a fondness for stereotypes

Dear GCN:

It is not surprising that the first thing your newest reader in Rhode Island ("A child psychologist") wants to do is censor you for doing your job of reporting gay news to the community; Rhode Island is big on censorship. He (she?) is "shocked and appalled" by your coverage of the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), in which he detects "a rather cavalier attitude regarding children's rights." On the contrary, I know of no organization that takes a more serious and realistic attitude regarding children's rights than NAMBLA does.

Our child psychologist assumes that children have no sexual needs, and compares a response to those who "seem to ask" for sex to letting a child ride a motorcycle over a cliff! Other than this patently unrealistic assumption, he offers in support of his blanket condemnation of intergenerational sex only the fact that he has seen some disturbed (by whom?) children.

Over a century ago the gay pioneer Karl Heinrich Ulrichs complained of his "scientific" opponents, including the psychologist Krafft-Ebing (author of *Psychopathia sexualis*), that they had seen only sick homosexuals and not healthy gay people. One is tempted to say that our anonymous psychologist has seen only sick individuals, and not healthy boy-lovers. But Ulrichs was being rhetorical. Of course Krafft-Ebing had seen healthy gay people; he simply refused to recognize the fact. Actually, shortly before his death in 1902 Krafft-Ebing reversed his view and did acknowledge the existence of healthy gay people. Let us hope that our child psychologist will not wait until he is *in extremis* (as his priest would say) before he recognizes that children do have sexual needs.

In the meantime, be warned that this Rhode Islander, hiding behind "state law need to report," is willing to sell any gay person down the river in order to avoid the stereotype of being a child molester. The irony is, of course, that his actions merely perpetuate the stereotype that he fears will be laid on him, and so it probably will; Rhode Island is big on stereotypes.

Hubert Kennedy
Providence, RI

some clarifications

Dear GCN,

In our article "Sex and Ideology in Cuba" [GCN, Vol. 12, No. 11] we claimed that the directors of *Improper Conduct* lacked evidence and argumentation for many of their accusations. The responses to our piece did not seem to address these issues but instead may have been reactions to a misreading of our "position." As a matter of clarification, our position is that a film about Cuban homophobia and suppression of social and artistic "deviants" should and could have been made without recourse to the propaganda and dishonesty found in *Improper Conduct*.

Also, we did not mean for our analysis of the sex education program to be read as a case for the lack of homophobia and suppression in Cuba. We clearly disclaimed the analysis of the texts in our article. We did not overstate the significance of the program. We indicated that contradictions exist within the texts themselves, between the texts and societal values, and between the leaders of the sex-ed program and other state leaders (a line on this final point was mistakenly deleted when the article was typeset.) The sex-ed program, however, does play a modest role in socialization and analyzing it is relevant to an understanding of the state. Despite examining a few apparently positive indicators of change, and relaying the sense that Cuban sexual ideology was not static, we tried not to assert any definite or unilinear trend. In retrospect perhaps we should have more carefully clarified and disclaimed our intent and the limits of our research.

In the article we focused on what we knew about, and what our research and impressions had yielded. We did not, as Samuel Farber states, "evade" the question of political prisoners in Cuba; it was not the subject of our article. We brought up Amnesty International and the Red Cross only because the directors of *Improper Conduct* had stated in their response to Ruby Rich's review in *American Film* that the two organizations have not been allowed in Cuba when in fact they have been. (When we spoke with Amnesty we were not informed of any significant restrictions during their 1977 report in Cuba, but, as we stated in the article, we were told that they are unsure how welcome they are now to return.)

We too had problems with Ambrosio Fornet's apparently complete denial of suppression of gay artists, and social/political "deviants." This is not our view. In our article we mentioned the "cruelly traditional" parts of the sex-ed texts; the "startling degree of open homophobia" in Cuba; the "brutal treatment and excesses" of UMAP; the "upsetting contribution" that the 1971 Congress on Education and Culture made "to Cuban prejudice, paranoia, and discrimination against homosexual artists and intellectuals"; and the lack of state efforts made until recently to end discrimination against gays.

It is perhaps not very far from some of Farber's criticisms when we suggest here that intense moral competition (or "emulation"), peer pressure, politicization and nationalism may be inscribing oppressive marks on Cuban society, and eliminating significant interstitial freedoms as state and civil society are conflated. And with Farber we might also ask rhetorically, "If Fornet feels that an apology is due to Caracol why doesn't he write about that matter in the *Cuban press*?"

Cuba has witnessed a successful struggle against U.S. imperialism, and the genesis of a nation marked by both very satisfactory growth rates and a highly egalitarian society. The question, of course, is at what "cost" has this success and equality been achieved. To what extent is it true that the mass of society has been forced to trade-off increases in political voice and autonomy for economic gains and security? In contrast to Farber ("Cuba: Still Stuck in the ABC's," *Against the Current*, Fall 1983), we think the institutionalization of People's Power in 1976 may represent a step toward making Cuba not only egalitarian but politically democratic also.

Sincerely,
Richard Turits
Laura Gotkowitz
Providence, RI

GCN welcomes letters to the editor. If possible, they should be TYPED and DOUBLESPACED, and where possible limited to five typed pages. They should be sent to: Community Voices, GCN, 167 Tremont St. #5, Boston, MA 02111.

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Speaking Out Pornography, Free Speech and Gay Separatism

By Robert Halfhill

Since my last article on the antipornography movement ("On Anti-Porn Efforts and Gay Male Separatism," *GCN*, May 26, 1984), I have realized that there is a need for a still deeper level of analysis concerning the reasons for supporting free speech. There are also additional reasons why the antipornography movement is anti Gay.

The rationale for free speech was first fully articulated by John Stuart Mill in 1859 in his *On Liberty*. Since there are increasingly powerful anti-free speech tendencies in the left in general and the Lesbian and Gay movements in particular in the form of the antiporn movement and other tendencies, I will quote extensively from the second chapter of *On Liberty*, "On The Liberty Of Thought And Discussion," as a valuable and much needed prophylactic to these trends.

Mill's first argument was that the opinion subjected to suppression could be true. "Those who desire to suppress it, of course, deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind (humanity), and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because they are sure that it is false, is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. *All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility.*" (The emphasis of the last sentence is my own. Since Mill wrote in 1859, he was not aware of the error of referring to the human race with male terms such as "mankind" The correct terminology will be inserted in parentheses wherever the sexist terms appear.)

The immediate reply, of course, will be something along the lines of: "How dare you grant any possibility that the opinions of sexists, racists and even Nazis are true. Are we not justified in taking action to prevent the harmful effects which we *know* their opinions produce?"

However, the harmful effects of the opinions of sexists, racists and Nazis are not actualized until they carry out actions based on these opinions. We are justified in taking steps to prevent the *actions* of these groups when they harm others. However, actions and the expression of opinion are two different things. And while the opinions of sexists, racists and Nazis are *extremely* unlikely to be true, to assume that we can *ever* make a factual judgement with *no possibility* of error is to assume that we would be right in every case if we made a million such judgements. Or a trillion. Or a trillion to the trillionth power.

Furthermore, the way in which we can obtain the greatest assurance that our opinions are true is by examining the arguments on the other side (or sides) and determining that they do not succeed in refuting our opinion. As Mill put it: "There is the greatest difference between presuming an opinion to be true, because, with every opportunity for contesting it, it has not been refuted, and assuming its truth for the purpose of not permitting its refutation. Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right."

Some people argued that certain opinions should not be permitted to be questioned because of their social usefulness. Mill replied: "The usefulness of an opinion is itself matter of opinion: as disputable, as open to discussion, and requiring discussion as much as the opinion itself.... And it will not do to say that the heretic may be allowed to maintain the futility or harmlessness of his (or her) opinion, though forbidden to maintain its truth.... In the opinion, not of bad men (people), but of the best men (people), no belief which is contrary to truth can be really useful: and can you prevent such men (persons) from urging that plea, when they are charged with culpability for denying some doctrine which they are told is useful, but which they believe to be false?"

It was also argued that some opinions should be banned because of their evil consequences. Mill pointed out that the assumption of infallibility involved here was at precisely its most dangerous when the opinion proposed for banning was denounced as immoral: "It is among such that we find the instances memorable in history, when the arm of the law has been employed to root out the best men (persons) and the noblest doctrines; with deplorable success as to the men (persons), though some of the doctrines have survived to be (as if in mockery) invoked in defense of similar conduct towards those who dissent from *them*, or from their received interpretation."

Mill's second argument for freedom of speech was that we do not fully understand the propositions in which we believe until we have heard all the arguments for and against them: "There is a class of persons (happily not quite so numerous as formerly) who think it enough if a person assents undoubtedly to what they think true, though he (or she) has no knowledge whatever of the grounds of the opinion and could not make a tenable defense of it against the most superficial objections.... Where their influence prevails, they make it nearly impossible for the received opinion to be rejected wisely and considerately, though it may still be rejected rashly and ignorantly; for to shut out discussion entirely is seldom possible, and when it once gets in, beliefs not grounded on conviction are apt to give way before the slightest semblance of an argument."

Mill continued: "...Nor is it enough that he (or she) should hear the arguments of adversaries from his (or her) own teachers, presented as they state them, and accompanied by what they offer as refutations.... He (or she) must be able to hear them from persons who actually believe them; who defend them in earnest, and do their very utmost for them. He (or she) must know them in their most plausible and persuasive form; he (or she) must feel

the whole force of the difficulty which the true view of the subject has to encounter and dispose of; else he (or she) will never really possess himself (or herself) of the portion of truth which meets and removes the difficulty."

Mill concluded: "...mankind (humanity) ought to have a rational assurance that all objections have been satisfactorily answered; and how are they to be answered if that which requires to be answered is not spoken? or how can the answer be known to be satisfactory, if the objectors have no opportunity of showing that it is unsatisfactory?"

Mill had two other arguments for freedom of speech. The first was not only the grounds of an opinion but often the meaning of an opinion itself is forgotten in the absence of discussion. His examples were primarily about religious creeds but the same argument could be raised with respect to feminism or any other philosophy intended to have an effect on human behavior.

Mill's last argument was that were cases in which both the orthodox and dissenting opinion contained a portion of the truth.

Mill stated his conclusion near the beginning of his work: "If all mankind (humanity) minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind (humanity) would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he (or she), if he (or she) had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind (humanity).... But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity, as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it."

Today, some Marxists and feminists would dissent from Mill's arguments. Some Marxists would probably argue that Mill and other civil libertarians represent "bourgeois liberalism" and that opinions represent the interests of one class or another and that speech is a weapon in promoting these interests. Those who are with the working class, these Marxists would argue, will attempt to promote the speech that represents the interests of the working class and suppress that speech that represents the interests of the class enemy. Some feminists would argue that free speech arguments are a shibboleth of the "male left" and that they are only concerned with defending that speech that defends the interests of women. They would view certain other speech as a weapon of the patriarchy. However, it is still a matter of opinion as to what represents the interests of workers and women. Whoever decides this question without letting the opposing view be heard presumes to be infallible.

There are reasons of political principle for opposing the antipornography movement and supporting free speech also. Does anyone think that our present male, capitalist controlled government would support speech that promotes the interests of women and workers and suppress speech that is in their own interests if we help to give them increased powers of censorship? It is an ironical commentary on the "feminist" antipornography movement that the government of Ontario has censored both "Not A Love Story" and "Born in Flames." "Our Bodies, Ourselves" would once have been banned under the censorship laws that the "feminist" antipornographers are trying to restore.

Since I wrote my last article, I have realized that there is a yet deeper reason for the majority of the lesbians' hatred of gays that has led them to be instrumental in starting a campaign against the adult bookstores which has led to the arrests of over 3600 gays in Minneapolis alone. I had thought in the past that the acrimony and bickering that had occurred at joint gay-lesbian meetings was merely because the lesbians didn't dare attack the hetero establishment that is responsible for their oppression and found it easier to take their anger out on us. However, women in this society are raised to be, on the average, far more puritanical about sex than men. This is not necessarily a biological characteristic; Margaret Mead studied a New Guinea society called the Tchambuli where the women were sexually aggressive and the men sexually passive. (*Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*) If our mass, industrial society had developed from a culture like the Tchambuli, we might now have a male antipornography movement and women patronizing the adult bookstores. But be that as it may, most Lesbians have a profound hatred of gay male sexuality, even though it is in no way directed towards them and is none of their business. Although there are some Lesbians who support "politically incorrect" forms of sexuality and sexual freedom in general, the majority of the Lesbians support the antipornography movement. They have a profound hatred of gays and our sexuality. They couldn't possibly have been so naive as to not realize that a campaign against the adult bookstores would lead to this massive total of arrests. The majority of lesbians have declared war on the gay community and gays will be fools if we let them cajole and guilt-trip us into not retaliating.

"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. Submissions to "Speaking Out" should be TYPED and DOUBLE SPACED, and, if possible, held to under 5 pages in length. The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111

Community Voices

pro-life or pro-guilt?

To the Editor:

New York's vigorous Roman Catholic Archbishop, John O'Connor, has spent considerable energy fighting to make abortion a crime. There is a simple way that the Archbishop could reduce abortions without changing the law: IF the Archbishop would encourage sex education in the Roman Catholic schools and encourage education about and use of contraceptives throughout New York City, it is certain that the number of abortions would drop. But Archbishop O'Connor opposes the pill, the rubber, the diaphragm, and all other devices of birth control. O'Connor pretends to be against abortion; in reality, he is against sex. And if he succeeds in outlawing abortion, he will next seek to outlaw contraception, homosexuality, and even divorce. O'Connor pretends to be "pro-Life"; but in reality, he is "pro-guilt."

In the Republic of Ireland the Constitution already has been amended to outlaw abortion. The *New York Daily News* of 10 October 1984 reported an amusing incident:

"A young Russian couple...at Shannon Airport...were mistaken for defectors. The two, on a stopover on the Havana-Moscow Aeroflot route, went to the duty-free store. In poor English, the man asked for 'protec-

tion.' He was whisked away for questioning by immigration authorities.... But, after 20 minutes, officials learned that he was not after political protection but sexual protection — condoms. The authorities could not help the young lovers. In Catholic Ireland, the sale of condoms is barred except to married couples and then only with a doctor's prescription."

Rather than endorse prophylactics, the Archbishop presented a major address on Monday 15 October 1984 to once again condemn abortion. And to aid his cause, he had Mother Theresa of Calcutta invoke her blessing on his crusade. But surely, Calcutta, with its extreme poverty and overpopulation is an argument on behalf of birth control and abortion. America requires No Calcutta solutions to its problems.

Moreover, the Catholic argument against abortion is based on the view that at the moment of conception, when the sperm meets the ovum, at that moment a human life with a soul is created. How certain the Pop and O'Connor are that a human life and soul are present at conception!

Yet Pope Gregory IX declared that Jews should be slaves who should suffer (though not be killed). In 1555 leaders of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain — then the world's leading Catholic power — debated whether American Indians were human or not. They were not sure that the Aztecs and Incas and Mayas were human! But the Church is now certain about the day-old fetus!

Even the Catholic view on fetuses has changed. The present view was not adopted until 1869. Indeed, the Pope was not declared infallible until 1870. Prior to that time Catholic leaders usually held a different view on the fetus. Thomas Aquinas did not think of it as human until it kicked. The official Church view prior to 1869 was that a male fetus became human in the 4th month, the female fetus in the 6th. The Church changed in 1869. Will it do so again?

But now Archbishop O'Connor is certain about when the fetus becomes human, and he attacks Ms. Ferraro and Gov. Cuomo for their pro-choice position on abortion. Ms. Ferraro has even discussed the possibility of resigning office if threatened with ex-communication. It seems unlikely that the Church will ex-communicate Ms. Ferraro; after all, it never got around to ex-communicating Adolph Hitler. But then, perhaps the Roman Catholic Church preferred Hitler's "pro-Life" stance to the "pro-Choice" views of Ms. Ferraro.

Roman Catholic leaders have dominated Europe on several occasions. The first such domination we still call the Dark Ages; the last, we call the Holocaust.

If the Archbishop is serious about reducing the number of abortions, let him place a rubber stamp of approval on condoms.

Yours truly,
Hugh Murray
New York, NY

midwestern gcN

Dear Friends,

I was shocked to discover, recently, that we are no longer receiving *Gay Community News* in the library. Our most recently received issue is from mid-summer 1984.

Through the Henry Gerber-Pearl M. Hart Library, *GCN* is preserved in the Midwest and made available to the Chicago area Lesbian/Gay community. We have a complete set of the *Alternative Press Index* in which *GCN* is indexed, so it has been a very accessible source for information. Our patrons, especially students, have turned to it for accounts of legislation, the military, lesbian mothers, third world people, cross-dressing, and the many, many other topics about which information is needed (including news about certain events in Chicago which were hardly covered by our own local press — thank you!). We consider our set of *GCN* an important resource here in Chicago.

It would be great to hear from you soon about the possibility of getting our all volunteer organization back on your complimentary mailing list.

Thank you very much,
Joseph P. Gregg
Co-Director
Gerber-Hart Library
Chicago, IL

S/M Photography

Mark I. Chester: The School of Hard Cocks

By Nicholas Deutsch

1
S/M Photography (featuring the work of Mark I. Chester), Sept. 26, 1984, at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, New York, N.Y.



“Bill Browning”
from the performance piece “Metamorphosis.”

Mark I. Chester feels that photography is a potent force for gay men in general and S/M men in particular, for the latter can break two taboos at once, one on showing two men together and one on “dark, erotic imagery” (a favorite phrase). Chester began taking pictures as documentation of S/M scenes in which he was involved, then discovered that photography could reinforce his sexually dominant role: the click of the camera shutter was a turn-on to the bottom. “I got more into

photography as I got more into S/M.” These early photos are typically solo shots of bound men, faces obscured or covered, bodies immobilized. Bare interiors, a lot of sexual action. Black-and-white predominates: grainy, dark, some-

burned, leaving 75 people homeless. After the physical devastation came the political, as the straight press scapegoated the S/M community: news media and Mayor tromped through Chester’s playroom, his S/M gear was stolen, his photos trashed, his furniture ransacked. “They abused my rights and ridiculed me. I felt as if I had been raped.” Chester resolved to intensify his efforts to send his own energy out into the community, to try and show “wonderful and positive things coming out of an S/M space.”

This post-fire work takes off in new directions. There’s a wider range of subject and locale, including a few photos of two men together and of solo women. More experiments with light and silhouette. The black and white photos are freer in style, less brightly lit. There are theater photographs and shots of a performance piece during which Chester put pianist and piano into bondage.

As slide follows slide, I become aware how individual and untransferable each person’s relationship to a photograph can be. My first reaction to many of the early photos, especially those of heavy bondage scenes, is to feel very *distant*. I’m conscious of how cut off I feel from usual sources of information about human feelings: faces are hidden, bodies prone and immobile, surroundings bare and subjects alone. It’s a bit like being stranded, waterless, in the desert. I’m left with a sense of sadness and isolation.

Odder still, I find that these photos fail to touch or summon forth those “dark, erotic places” in my own desires and fantasies. (I know they’re there.) Is it because the paraphernalia is so *specific*? If you happen to be into clothespins, rubber or yards and yards of rope (either as top or bottom), you might very well identify with, be turned on by, or find something human in these pictures that I’ve missed. But if you aren’t, Chester

results) but to control and limit our access to the inner lives of the men portrayed.

There’s also the matter of hard cocks. Let’s face it: the penis is one of the least emotionally expressive parts of the human male’s anatomy. It can be hard; it can be soft: it can be somewhere in between. That’s about it. Emotion is exactly what we *can’t* derive from a close-up of a hard cock, because we know that getting an erection is a



“Fire in the Fast Lane”
from the series “City of Wounded Boys and Sexual Warriors.”

hasn’t allowed you any other way into the picture: he’s not only used his skill as a photographer to dominate his subject (with presumably sexually gratifying

quirky, unpredictable physiological response: the meaning remains personal and private. Even the

Continued on page 11

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Dean McDowell

BOSTON — Dean Noyes McDowell, Jr. of Dorchester and West Simsbury, Connecticut, died of respiratory failure at Beth Israel Hospital on November 26, 1984 after an eleven-month struggle with AIDS.

McDowell helped to organize the 1983 and 1984 Chiltern Mountain Club Hikes for Life to benefit the Boston AIDS Action Committee and was instrumental in two workshops on AIDS for club members. Since his diagnosis, he wrote several letters to *GCN* discussing AIDS and how it affected his life.

Born in Columbia, South Carolina on March 10, 1950, McDowell attended schools in Honolulu and Maryland. He graduated from Tufts University and did post-graduate work at the University of Hartford, earning a Master of Arts degree in landscape architecture through Beacon College in Washington, D.C. in 1982.

McDowell traveled extensively in Europe, the Soviet Union, the Middle East, the South Pacific, New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, and the Americas. He spoke fluent French and Swedish and was competent in Greek, Hebrew and Spanish.

A mycologist, naturalist and plant forager, he served as nature and canoe instructor for two mountain climbing clubs

and was a member of the executive committee of the Chiltern Mountain Club for three years.

Among his many landscaping projects, McDowell completed the Tropical Rain Forest at the Central Park Zoo Tropical Building in New York City and, as design consultant and project manager for the North Shore Community Arts Foundation, completed the Beverly Music Theater and the Montserrat School of Art. He consulted at the Arnold Arboretum and also designed extensively for zoos, parks and private residences during his career.

He is survived by his parents, Colonel and Mrs. Dean McDowell of Nokesville, Virginia; a brother Ralph, also of Nokesville; and two sisters, Anne of Winston-Salem, North Carolina and Gail of Berkeley, California; and his longtime friend Conrad Cylkowski of West Simsbury, Conn.

A memorial service will be held at the Lindsay Chapel of Emmanuel Church, 16 Newbury Street, Boston, on December 9 at 2:00 p.m.

Donations in his memory may be made to the AIDS Action Committee/Fenway Community Health Center, 16 Haviland Stret, Boston 02115.

Elections

Continued from page 1

debunked the notion that scratching a gay person reveals a liberal, at least, and a flaming radical, at most. Ebersole holds title as the only elected openly gay Republican in the country. Like U.S. Rep. Gerry Studds, Ebersole came out after his election, but since coming out has involved himself in the movement for gay rights, albeit in its conservative wing.

Ebersole sidestepped more substantive questions concerning the participation of a rabidly homophobic radical right in the Republican Party, and instead, encouraged gay Republicans to join the newly formed CAIR, a forum for moderate to conservative gay people. In the question and answer period, Ebersole said the group will maintain a single-issue focus on gay and lesbian civil rights.

Ebersole insisted that Republican officeholders can be swayed to support gay rights when gay Republicans come out and show them that the issue is important to conservatives as well as liberals.

Virginia Apuzzo of NGTF took the podium and told the audience that she puts politics in the context of social change. "A movement," she said, "that is truly accountable to the notion 'we are everywhere and we are everyone' forces you to develop an objective that goes beyond the acquisition of a particular law or ordinance, but moves you toward dealing with the generic issue of oppression."

She said that politics is an incomplete strategy for a social change movement and called on the gay movement to take on the job of educating people. "Unless we couple politics with education, we leave ourselves vulnerable to elections in which an unsympathetic administration wins."

In conclusion, Apuzzo declared, "One of the things we forget when we approach the government is

that when we approach a system that would love to die and be static, we force it to be alive and be dynamic and to live up to what it says it can do... When we do that, we'll be a social change movement."

In response to an audience question concerning changing the agenda of the Republican Party, Apuzzo suggested a change in tactics in the future. She said that Americans are fair-minded, but must be shown unfairness, "with no subtleties. We should perhaps return to more direct confrontational strategies, demonstrations and such. But it must be worked out in a coordinated fashion, moving us toward objectives that make the government respond to us."



Gil Gerald

Gil Gerald noted in response to a question concerning racism in the gay community that our own institutions must be prevailed upon to change. Using gentrification in Washington, D.C. as an example, he said, "I'm appalled that people move into a neighborhood and their only concerns are trash removal and getting rid of the drug users sitting on their steps.... No group has properly addressed gentrification. Our movement has to move away from a single issue focus. If we don't make connections, if we don't recruit or involve people of color in the movement, people will write us off."



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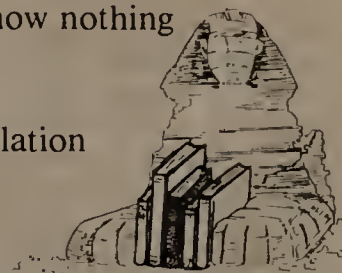
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FAMILY & WRITERS TALK

Michael Bronski and Andrea Loewenstein have been frequent contributors to GCN over the past six years. This interview is one of a series of dialogues they've done for GCN, talking and typing it up at the same time, a method they recommend to avoid the hours and hours needed to transcribe a tape recording.

Andrea, who is now on leave of absence in London, has been the director of the Jefferson Park Writing Center, a community school she founded in the Jefferson Park housing project in Cambridge, Mass. three years ago. The publication "Flowers in a Field of Thorns" is a yearly collection of writing by the women she has worked with there. She also taught creative writing to women at the Massachusetts Correctional Institute at Framingham for three years.

Andrea's poems and short stories are just beginning to appear in the world — Conditions 10 has a recent story. Her criticism has appeared in New Women's Times and Women's Review of Books as well as in GCN. The high point of Andrea's GCN career was the soap opera "Random Lust" which some readers may remember first appeared in April 1980.

Michael's book Culture Clash: The Making of Gay Sensibility traces the tremendous impact gay people have made upon mainstream culture from the Victorian times of Oscar Wilde and Walt Whitman to the post-new wave theatrics of Boy George and Michael Jackson. Bronski started writing for GCN eight years ago when his then roommate Neil Miller was the features editor and needed some extra copy to fill space. He is now the paper's main film and theater critic, a constant book reviewer and general popular culture maven. He has also written for the Boston Phoenix, the now-defunct Real Paper, Stallion, Fag Rag, Boston Gay Review and once did a one-shot guest spot in the Boston Herald American.

Andrea thinks she and Michael met when he called her up about Random Lust. Michael thinks they met when he was looking for someone to do a dialogue on pornography. They have been friends for five years.

Michael's book is published by the South End Press. Andrea's book, This Place, is published by Routledge and Kegan Paul. Both books are available in area bookstores. Glad Day Books, at 43 Winter St. near Downtown Crossing, will host a book-signing party with Michael on Friday, Dec. 14 from 5 to 7pm.

Andrea: Here we both are with a book out. Can you believe it? It seems like almost everyone wants to write a book, but hardly anyone gets to write one, let alone publish one.

Michael: I think that's a middle-class assumption. I think that a lot of people might want to show or prove themselves in different ways.

Andrea: I think *that's* a middle-class assumption on your part. Because in teaching writing and literature to students who are primarily working-class, I found that the tremendous desire to write a book, to be published, to be listened to, to be *heard*, was true of almost every student. Not the feeling of "this is any kind of real possibility for me," but the desire.

Michael: I'm still not convinced that everybody wants to write a book. I think that everyone wants to be heard and listened to. But I'm not sure that that means a book. Maybe because you were teaching writing classes that's the impression you got.

Andrea: People may not want to sit down and write a book themselves, but I think that everyone feels that they have a book inside them. Haven't you heard people say, "My life would make a great book" — the desire is there.

Michael: I don't doubt that. I just don't think that everyone thinks of it in terms of a book. Some people may want to see their lives and stories as movies or TV or soap operas or rock songs...

Andrea: ...Or operas. I agree with you. But that brings me back to the question of what made you able to take this desire we agree most people have and actually make it become reality?

Michael: I think a lot of it had to do with my own notion that writing a book was something good and important to do. I grew up with this assumption, and a lot of my training was aimed in that direction.

Andrea: Are you talking about your class background, or that your parents encouraged you especially toward literature?

Michael: I guess I mean basically growing up middle-class — my parents never particularly encouraged me about anything.

Andrea: What do you mean they didn't encourage you? You mean they didn't push you toward a certain thing?

Michael: No, I mean they were never very encouraging when I was doing anything, or maybe I should say they weren't very supportive.

Andrea: Are they supportive now?

Michael: As supportive as you would expect them to be about a book that keeps talking about the "heterosexual dictatorship."

Andrea: How out are you to them?

Michael: Well, they've always known —

Andrea: Always?

Michael: Well, they sent me to see a psychologist when I was 12. They thought I was a homosexual because I was reading Nancy Drew books — but she assured them I was not.

Andrea: How about now?

Michael: They haven't sent me to see a psychologist for 20 years. We've just gotten around to saying the word "homosexual."

Andrea: In reference to you?

Michael: No. Of course it's implicitly about me, but it's never directly stated.

Andrea: If your parents were so unsupportive of everything you did, what do you think got you to the point where you could write a book?

Michael: I'm convinced a large part of it is the middle-class assumption that you should do something with your life and that writing a book is something that is deemed appropriate.

Andrea: Well, there are a lot of other things that are deemed more appropriate than writing a gay book — like becoming a doctor or a lawyer or a professor — at least in the middle-class I grew up in.

Michael: Right, those are appropriate, too, but I think my ten year old homosexual fantasies prompted me to fall more into the "creative" category.

Andrea: But was literature important at all in your family?

Michael: Well, I can remember being in high school and reading Joyce's *Ulysses* with my father.

Andrea: Well, that sounds pretty supportive. What didn't they do?

Michael: They just aren't very supportive people. I suppose they feel you should be strong enough to do it yourself.

Andrea: Do what? Everything?

Michael: Yes.

Andrea: This sounds maybe like an ethnic difference between us. Jewish immigrant parents certainly believe in pushing and encouraging their children, which can be both positive and negative — there is something to be said for being left alone a little.

Michael: I'm not sure this is an ethnic difference, since I didn't identify with any ethnic group growing up. We were religiously Catholic, but I think my cultural self-definition was middle-class and American. So are you saying your background was a large help in enabling you to write later in life?

Andrea: Yes. Some of my very earliest memories are of being read to by my mother, memorizing poems with her. My own early poems and writing were always met with delight and encouragement — not usually by my teachers, but always by my mother. But I still needed the women's movement and my experience of coming out in order to write a book.

Michael: I think the same is true for me — that a



Michael Bronski and Andrea Loewenstein

political identity gave me a way to think about things in such a way that I could write a book, and actually, in my case, gave me the very subject the book is about.

Andrea: It feels more indirect for me. Almost all the characters in my book are lesbians, but it's a novel, it's not really *about* being a lesbian. For me, coming out didn't give me a political identity so much as make me feel: If I could do this one thing I'd always longed to do, but assumed I'd have to keep in the realm of fantasy, then maybe I could do other things I'd always assumed I couldn't — like be a writer. I'd been writing since I was a child, but I called myself a "Writer" for the first time right after I came out.

Michael: But that beginning spark came from your family and your class and cultural background.

Andrea: Yes, but in my family there's also a strong push for women to become professionals in order to survive well in the world — in our history survival hasn't been something you assume. So the "natural" path for me would have been to become a professional woman who wrote a little on the side, just as I was supposed to have been a married woman who could have intense friendships with women on the side. When I came out, it was especially hard for my mother because she worked so hard to make me a good American girl who could pass — and it seemed to her that I was willfully throwing that away. I'm still struggling with the first one — balancing my identity as a writer and a teacher.

But one thing that bothers me is that in this society writers are so mystified. We're taught to believe it's magic — some people are and some people aren't and that's that. So I want to know about some of the concrete things in your daily life — people, work, rituals, sex — that helped you to do this book. And also the

FRIENDS: K COMMUNITY



Jane Myers



Andrea Freud Loewenstein

things that got in your way.

Michael: Well, clearly not having a full-time job is a great asset in being able to just have the time to write. I've been lucky enough to be able to work part time and get by with some writing and editing skills — which I got from my education.

Andrea: How about your living situation? I know I've found living alone both necessary for my writing and lonely at times.

Michael: After having always lived with roommates or with a lover for the past six years, I think I function better with home companionship than without it. What I lose in solitude is made up by security. But what's even more important for me is being connected to a larger community, a circle of friends whom I've not only relied on, but who have actually helped me to get published.

Andrea: How did you first get published?

Michael: Well, I first started writing reviews and criticism because I was living with Neil Miller who needed copy to fill up space in *GCN*. And after six or seven years of that, Ellen Herman over at South End Press asked me several times if I wanted to work on a book about gay culture.

Andrea: Several times?

Michael: Yes, it took two letters and several phone calls before I even decided to have lunch with her.

Andrea: Why were you so hesitant?

Andrea: Even though I had been writing for so many

years, it never occurred to me I could actually write a book — even though this professional publisher was asking me.

Andrea: Nobody asked *me* to write a book — in fact *This Place* is my second novel. Like my first, which is now in a drawer, I just began to write this book seven years ago without thinking about publication. I didn't even admit to myself I was writing a novel until I had over 200 pages. It was in the later stages — revision and attempted publication — that friends really helped.

Michael: But what was it in your actual life that allowed you, or encouraged you, to write, and eventually to write a whole novel?

Andrea: Well, *This Place* is set in a women's prison and I was working at Framingham Prison at the time. My contact with the women there was very important. When I first began to write the novel, I was at a quite isolated and lonely time in my life, and the relationships I had with the women in the prison, my life there, was the most real thing.

I've always taught, and the nurturance and support I get from this definitely helps me write. At other times being in love inspires me. I guess a combination of a certain amount of security and structure and enough separateness is ideal for me. But I'm talking now about the process of writing a first draft. I've learned that making that first draft into a book is a whole other process.

Michael: What was that?

Andrea: As far as publishing went, I had several false starts: an unenthused agent who told me the book was rejected by 17 houses, and a deal with a beginning press that never got off the ground. I did have an early editor, Simone Reagor, who worked with me in revising the book. Then Kate Dunn, who'd seen an early version of the book and kept encouraging me to publish, worked with me very closely on what became the final version. She was eventually responsible for the book's acceptance by and publication at Routledge.

Sometimes I miss the freedom I had working on that first draft, before I'd even thought about publication. I certainly don't feel that now when I sit down to write, and I guess I never will again.

Michael: I think one thing that is true for both of us is that we depend to a certain extent upon community — in many aspects.

Andrea: I find being part of the politically active lesbian community in Boston is really helpful — but it sometimes gets in my way.

Michael: How do you mean?

Andrea: I think it gives me certain pressures and constraints. For instance, when I began to write in the voice of one character who is black, I was very conscious that this was something which might not be approved of by "my community." Also, I find neglect or rejection from my own community much harder to take and more wounding than the same thing or worse from the outside world, from which I don't expect that much anyway.

For instance, the other day I went on a talk show on WRKO radio and dealt quite happily with a homophobic talk show host and very hostile callers. But when *GCN* was less than enthusiastic about printing this interview when I proposed it, it hurt me a lot more. On the other hand, it's hard to even imagine writing without the long-term support from friends in the lesbian and gay community who have come to my readings and continue to support and encourage me over the years.

Michael: I think my being in this community for almost 20 years has literally made it possible for me to write this book. Observing, interacting, sleeping with and hanging out with gay men — and lesbians and the larger political community — has allowed me to understand and write about the effect that gay men have upon the mainstream and how that culture affects gay people. It's hard to separate myself from that community.

Andrea: Have you ever experienced "the community" as a negative thing?

Michael: Not really. But when I spoke about community I meant the men I know in the bars and the Fenway as much as the people you see at meetings and at *GCN*. In fact, I think I mean them more than what is commonly called the "political community."

Andrea: But I remember when you were writing the porn chapter and some of the other more controversial parts of your book, you seemed quite worried about people's reactions.

Michael: You're right, to some degree. The disapproval I was feeling was coming from the political community. I think my observations — especially about sex and pornography — come from knowing that other, social community. That is the real experience — not the political theory. And part of my task in writing was to reconcile those two aspects of myself.

Andrea: This makes me think hard about what we are both calling "the political community" — and its restraints. The truth is I'm not worried about what imprisoned women — including third world women and lesbians — will think of *This Place*. I actually have a lot of confidence that they'll welcome the book, find it true to their experience. It's what the "political" women will think about what I say about these black/lesbian/imprisoned women that worries me.

Michael: What exactly do you think they will object to?

Andrea: As I said before, I think there's a feeling that a white woman shouldn't be writing in a black woman's voice, that a middle-class woman shouldn't be writing in the voice of a working-class woman. Maybe that women in prison and lesbians in general in *This Place* don't come out very revolutionary or heroic will be criticized. Possibly some criticism because the main Jewish character is all too human.

Michael: I think several times in my book I've taken positions to be provocative.

Andrea: You mean *just* to be provocative? You didn't really believe them?

Michael: No, I believed them. It was more the wording or the tone that was meant to incite or to provoke the reader to think further than they may have.

Andrea: But I think there are some actual issues in your book which *may* provoke controversy — your championing of pornography, your condemnation of gay politics within the system, and your assertion that gay people are obsessed with sex and that that's in their favor. I loved that last point myself. But I'm sure there are people who won't.

Michael: I think that everything in my book is reasonable, well thought out, and right. Anyone who doesn't agree with me is wrong and self-deceived.

Andrea: Do I detect a note of defensiveness?

Michael: No.

Andrea: NO?

Michael: Everyone has opinions, and if I didn't believe my own then I wouldn't have written the book.

Andrea: Is it scary, now that it's a reality and people are going to read it?

Michael: A little. But I suppose if people hate it, they have at least read it.

Andrea: That's my main fear too. I do feel vulnerable right now as I wait for the book to be available. But my worst fear is that no one will read it.

Michael: What does the publication of *This Place*, and everything that goes along with it, have to do with your identity as a writer?

Andrea: I don't know yet. I haven't been able to write lately, and I always feel like a fake saying I'm a writer unless I'm writing at the moment. But I guess

Continued on page 12

A Candid Portrait of *Choosing Children*

By Ellen Grabiner

As a lesbian in the sixth month of my first pregnancy, I felt warmed, supported and encouraged by the film *Choosing Children*, by Debra Chasnoff and Kim Klausner. I remembered my frustrating search for articles, books, anything about lesbians choosing to have children as I began my process of alternative fertilization (artificial insemination). The richness and diversity of the families in *Choosing Children* offers much to a lesbian in that same position today.

Chasnoff and Klausner described one of their main goals in making this film as providing "information and role models for lesbians who are considering parenting, for those who never thought it was a possibility and of course for those who have already made the decision to be mothers." They have succeeded admirably. They began with hundreds of returned questionnaires, interviewed 60 "families," and ended up with six situations in which lesbians of different ethnic, racial and economic backgrounds decided to raise children and are now doing so. The families in the film include three lesbian couples, a lesbian and gay man co-parenting, a group of five lesbians, and a single lesbian mother. Some of the children were conceived through alternative fertilization, with both known and unknown sperm donors, one was adopted and some were conceived in what Margarita, one of the mothers in the film, referred to as "the old-fashioned way," sleeping with a man.

The film does not focus on the process of *deciding* to have children as much as it presents the

viewer with women sharing how they went about getting pregnant and arranging parenting situations, once they had already decided.

For example, one of the most visually powerful passages in the film is the scene of Margarita, very pregnant, in her lavender maternity dress in bed with her lover, Lee. In this scene Margarita describes her joy and relief when she realized she could both be a lesbian and fulfill her lifelong desire to have children. Jan, a Seattle lesbian, recounts her search for a gay donor and father for her child. Julia, who lives in Cambridge with her lover and their three children, comically tells how she set the scene for the seduction that resulted in the birth of her daughter, Margo. Jan and Maidi, a lesbian couple, do a very funny routine illuminating the simplicity of the alternative fertilization process and even go so far as to recommend the most suitable receptacles for the semen: marinated artichoke heart jars. (My midwife brought the semen in a Grey Poupon mustard jar.)

The film offers much specific information, particularly with regard to the legal issues surrounding custody, the rights of the non-biological mother and the donor, and the need for contracts, wills and power of attorney agreements which are designed to facilitate a non-biological parent's ability to function as a "legal" parent. While the initial focus of the film was the decision to have children, it quickly becomes apparent that after the choice is made, the long-term issue becomes raising the child.

What the film makes abundant-



Rochelle, a single mother in Brooklyn with her children, Wasoni and El Horin from "Choosing Children."

ly clear is that we are just beginning to grasp the impact of lesbians choosing children and the resulting complexity of the issues surrounding these alternative families. The five lesbians who parent and care for four-year-old Annie say she is seen in the lesbian community as confident, assertive, independent and active. They wonder if a four-year-old boy whose behavior was similar would be labeled macho or aggressive. Julia, a black woman, and her lover Cheryl, a white woman, share their experiences with the school system and social service bureaucracy and how they dealt with the racism and homophobia they encountered when they presented themselves as the parents of their adopted daughter, Maria. A poignant interview with six-year-old El Horin begins to

touch upon the question of what happens to the children of a lesbian couple should they break up. The film raises questions that will merit scrutiny in the near future, such as: What impact does having a child have on the lesbian couple that manages to stay together? How does that couple deal with the inequalities inherent in one biological parent and one co-parent raising a child? How do their relationships with each other and with their community change as they become parents? And how will lesbians who choose not to have children relate to the shift in their communities as they adjust to include the needs of more mothers and children?

I found that *Choosing Children* had much in common with the only other film I had ever seen about lesbians and children, *In The Best*

Interests of the Children, a film about lesbian mothers' custody issues. That film portrayed lesbian mothers who had been married, had children and then came out — as opposed to lesbians who already were living a lesbian lifestyle when they decided to have children. The films are structured similarly. They both had chosen several different families to interview and film in their homes, at work, with the children and without, and interspersed these interviews with legal or social service representatives. What makes both of these films so alive is the warmth, articulateness and candor of the participants.

In *Choosing Children* one literally feels as if one were entering the lives of these parents and feels welcomed as they share their experiences with us openly and generously. Technically, this effect is enhanced by the straightforward camera work. Although my personal preference is towards a richer visual image, the filmmakers avoided creating a distance between the viewer and the lesbian mothers by employing a consistently "documentary" approach to framing their subjects. Given that this is Chasnoff and Klausner's first film together, I was particularly impressed with the editing. The film was paced well and transitions were clean, making visual as well as contextual sense.

The long-awaited release of *Choosing Children* leaves me feeling both satisfied that a real and pressing need is being met and wanting more: more information, more films as finely done as this one, more articles and more books. I am grateful to Klausner and Chasnoff for their important contribution to the pertinent and enormous task of documenting the powerful changes our choices are effecting. And I wonder if I could borrow a copy of the film to send to my lover's mother?!

"*Choosing Children*" will premiere in Boston on Saturday, Dec. 8 at Morse Auditorium, Boston University, 602 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, at 8pm, under the auspices of the Boston Film/Video Foundation. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$6 at the door.

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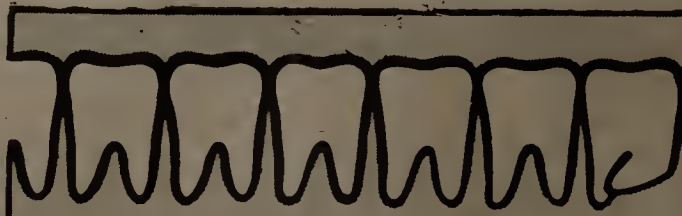
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S/M Pix

Continued from page 6

news that sexual pleasure and physical pain often go together is hardly fresh. Chester seems to overestimate the power and interest inherent in the image of a hard cock, when it's divorced from human hopes, fears and desires. These photos are icons, all right, but of what?

I found more opportunities in Chester's later work to connect, identify and ponder. The images still project sadness and isolation, but the expanded access to facial and physical expressiveness, and to varied environments, produces some memorable images. His ability to capture the right moment in a real-life situation also makes him an excellent theater photographer.

2.

The Metamorphosis, a performance piece by Mark I. Chester and Bill, Sept. 29, 1984, at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, New York, N.Y.

Chester and another man carry in a figure totally encased and bound in cloth, and place it upright on the platform. After a few words of introduction, Chester cuts the bonds. He takes his post at a slide projector part way back in the hall, from which he will show slides — first on the figure, then on a screen to one side — and read from a script into a microphone. The words concern the problems of maintaining his "long-distance relationship" with Bill Browning (the figure); he also reads portions of Browning's letters to him. The slides often show the original letters from which Chester is quoting (sometimes as part of collages) and many solo

shots of Browning, including an extended sequence of a rubber porno shoot which Browning describes in one of his letters.

Meanwhile, Browning emerges naked from his cocoon and starts to dress, slowly and methodically, in an intricate urban armor of metal and leather. He pauses to smoke a cigarette and drink beer. Jungle music comes from a portable cassette recorder. One comment aside — "I've never gotten dressed in front of so many people before" — Browning remains silent throughout the piece.

At the end, Chester joins the fully-clothed Browning on stage, and they go out together, Chester's arm over Browning's shoulder.

For me, the most striking moments are the first: Browning being carried on, a series of vividly colored slides projected on his covered body. During the rest, I find myself becoming dissatisfied and a bit bored. This has little to do with a lack of fancy effects — Chester has apologized beforehand for the limited means available — and a lot to do with structural vagueness and a slow, unvaried pace.

But what really disappoints is that the one thing the piece *doesn't* do for me is its stated aim: to share some of Chester's energy of his relationship with Browning. What's at stake between them simply isn't conveyed, despite the descriptions in Browning's letters of erotic desire and experience, as he plunges into the urban sexual jungle: "I would never have been thought of as a good little boy

Continued on next page



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S/M Pix

Continued from previous page

again." Even the promising set-up, with Chester in total control of text and image, isn't used to create any energy or tension between the performers. I'm not asking for conventional theatrical form, but just a little more thought, discipline and awareness of possible relationships between performers, material and onlookers. Limited means call for ingenious solutions.

Finally, two bothersome points: First, a letter from Browning's highly religious mother, hoping that her son will one day return home and become what she wants him to be. In itself, this is one of the most interesting pieces of text. But when Chester finishes reading it, instead of letting us draw our own conclusions, he repeats the last phrase sarcastically. Suddenly

I wonder: what's going on? Why does Chester have his knife out for this woman? However far removed her needs and fantasies may be from her son's, the complicitous tone of condescension is cheap and unpleasant.

Second, the whole masculinist mystique of the piece, which equates the passage from boyhood to manhood with submersion in extreme erotic sensation, ritualized clothing and aggressive imagery. Have I just had too much of phallogocentric America recently to accept this, especially in the absence of any really strong representations of warmth, trust, respect, support and caring between men? (Browning's letters suggest great uncertainties and periods of exhaustion and depression — is this what becoming a

man means?) Despite its conscious taboo-breaking, much of Chester's iconography is very familiar territory: cock-worship, lack of warm affect, and submerged, unexamined anger. These we see all around us; in this difficult time, I want and need something more, for myself and for those I love, than to enroll for new courses in the School of Hard Cocks.

Mark I. Chester, iconographer, P.O. Box 42501, San Francisco, CA 94101, (415) 621-6294.

Writers Talk

Continued from page 9

it's made a tenuous identity less tenuous. Writing is certainly what I believe in doing more than anything else. What about you?

Michael: I'm not sure I have an identity as a writer. It just feels like something I do. My identity is more as a sexual person, not as a writer. What you said before sounds sort of downbeat. Don't you have fantasies about the publication of your book?

Andrea: That I become famous and write five more novels and that everybody loves me. And you?

Michael: I guess I'd like people to read my book and then want to have sex with me.

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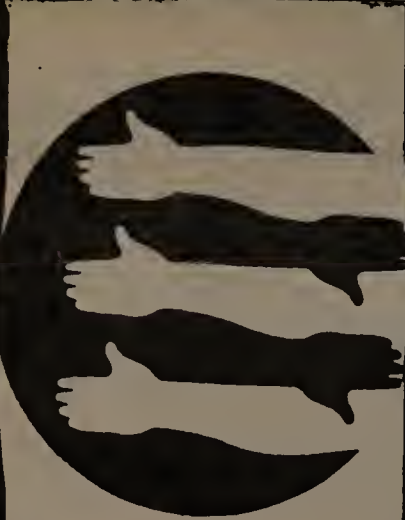
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TO ALL THOSE WHO IN AND OUT OF PRISON FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist.



R.O.S.I.(Remember Our Sisters Inside) is a network for publishing the artwork of women prisoners. They publish posters, postcards, stationery, etc. They are actively seeking other women to work with: inside and out. ROSI, 2000 Center St. No.1077, Berkeley CA 94704.



Aggressive Lesbian would like to write gay fems that are secure in their sexual preference. Robbie LLEWELLYN, W-19524 Harr B, Frontera CA 91720.

Gay fem would like penpals that know how to thrill another woman. Cheryl MORALES, W-18396, Harr B, Frontera CA 91720.



GCN GAY AND LESBIAN PRISONER PROJECT

We send free papers, books (when they are donated and when money for postage is donated) and run free penpal ads. (There's sometimes a long waiting list because of limited space.) Little by little as we get more volunteer labor power we'll be looking for other ways to support lesbians and gay men behind bars. If you can help with your time or a contribution (of money or paperbacks), please send to Gay and Lesbian Prisoner Project, c/o GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111. Thanks!

Prisoners and Friends!

Let gay organizations in your area know what's happening with lesbians and gay men behind bars; regularly - to raise their consciousness little by little and increase the chances of contact between people inside and out. GCN will send a list of gay organizations in your area.



I'm 23 and my hobbies include racquet ball, skating, and interior decorating. I'd like to correspond with women and men. Sandra FREEMAN, PO Box 3535, Norco CA 91760.

Black female, Aries, interested in meeting someone nice. Joyce JOHNSON, 18006 HB755L, Frontera CA 91720.

33 yr old Libra enjoys music, traveling, chess, and swimming. I would like to correspond with someone to share my thoughts and dreams. I have no preference in age, nationality or race. Jacqui JAMES, W-19976, BB1144, Frontera CA 91720.

I'd like to correspond with any nationality. I like most outdoor sports, love baseball, dancing and hairstyling. I'm a professional hairstylist. Lynda POLK, 19367 Harrison A634L, Frontera CA 91720.

Nice woman to write to. I live in a mental hospital. Marie CHEATLEY, Box A, Oakdale IA 52319.

I have been a homosexual all my life. I am seeking sincere correspondence with sincere individual. I'm 45, love art and music. Thank you. Susan KIRKWOOD, 19217 BB1134, Frontera CA 91720.

Prisoners Seeking Friends

BUILDING MORE PRISONS TO CURE "CRIME" IS LIKE BUILDING MORE TOILETS TO CURE DIARRHEA...



This is the first time I've ever been in jail and I've got 4 yrs to try and find some direction in my life. I've been hurt by lovers many times but need very much to write and get to know someone. I read a lot, love sex, and my three children are very important to me. Joel D. ROE, PO Box 4000 R, Fort Grant AZ 85643.

Sincere warm and loving Queen. Searching for that special "one". I am versatile, 31, of French and Italian descent, 'Bunny'. Robert BARRETT, 76C 197, PO Box 149, Attica NY 14011.

I'd like to make some friends in the Bay Area, where I hope to parole to in the next year or two. Born and raised on a farm so hopefully someone out there likes a somewhat shy down to earth cowboy. Robert J. McLEOD, 250029 IMU-A-7, PO Box 520, Walla Walla WA 99362.

My interests are cycling, country music, creative writing, and photography. I'm 43 and still a healthy specimen. Will exchange photos. Open to writing gay males or females. Your poetry page was great! Charles McLAUGHLIN, 80A 2548, Box B, Dannemora NY 12929.

I'm under the sign of Leo. While I've been in solitary I've tried to direct my energy into a 'positive' direction. I've been studying very occult things and need to find some individuals or organizations that I could correspond with on occult matters. I'm not speaking of those that depend on 'gods' and such for their mental crutch, but those that are truly 'about their business'. Ron A SMITH, 6524, PO Box 2, Lansing KS 66043.

I find your newspaper both enlivening and stimulating. I realize that you can't run a paper on charity, but I would appreciate it if you could put a penpal ad in for me sometime. Michael McKENZIE, 80 B 1575, Box 51, Comstock NY 12821.

I would like to open an avenue of communication towards a fem, TV or drag queen. Someone in search of a lasting relationship, from conversation to between two silk sheets. Dubois WATSON, 155-533, PO Box 57, Marion OH 43302.

Totally bisexual man, into music, food, literature, sports, romance, interested in meaningful relationship. Absolutely openminded, no prejudices whatsoever. Thomas D. ARTHUR, Z-427-DR, Holman Unit, Box 37, Atmore AL 36503.

I have my associate degrees in business and accounting and cooking school. Hoping to establish friendship with someone I can share my thoughts with. I love to read and write and do sports (and meet good people!). Chris JOHNSON, 168-694, PO Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

I am an aquarius. My crusade entails finding someone I can get to know while I'm in here (and basically alone). I like singing, dancing, and romancing. Please write (and send photo if possible). Michael BROOKS, 2856, PO Box 99, Pontiac IL 61764.

Former nurse would like someone to write to. Hobbies are swimming, tennis and racquetball. Would like to find a friend. Thanks. Willie BOSTON, 053504, 19000 S.W. 377 St., Fla. City FL 33034.

I got your address from a very good friend of mine. He said I might be able to start a correspondence with someone that has a nearly the same philosophy in life as me. I hope so. Gerald DAVIS, A-351366 (B-13), PO Box 500, Olustee FL 32072.

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PRISON PEN PALST

Both prisoners and outsiders may write the following address for info about joining a listing for correspondence organization for penpals. (They're slightly religious and have a very patronizing attitude toward prisoners, but you can ignore that.) Prison Pen Pals, Box 82188, San Diego, CA 92138.



I'm interested in writing other young gays. My interests include rock music, flying, sciences and computers. I'm new at being out and wondering where I'll end up! Mark EHLERS, 092723 RMC, PO Box 628, Lake Butler FL 32054.

I am a 29 yr old Pisces in jail and would love to hear from gays, lesbians and bis. Please send SASE for speedy reply. Rayfield NEWTON, CP-1, Jefferson City MO 65102.

Tall (6'4"!), handsome male heavily endowed wishes to hear from all size freaks! Samuel GOLDEN, 093265, PO Box 221, Raiford FL 32083.

I would like to have a nice Gay man to write to. I'm in need of friendship so if you are interested, write to me. Jessle WHITAKER, D-15578, PO Box 194, Alto GA 30596.



CALENDAR

December 1 to December 8

december 1 saturday

Cambridge — Dignity/Boston's 12th Anniversary buffet and dance party; Fantasy's In-town, 21 Brookline St., Central Square. 7PM. \$17 members, \$20 non-members. Info: 536-6518.

Boston — "Torch Song Trilogy"; at the Shubert Theater, 265 Tremont St. Shows: Mon.-Sat., 8PM; Wed.-Sat. 2PM. Tickets: \$20-\$32.50. Info: 426-4520.

Boston — "Had She Spoken" presented by Double Edge Theatre; Church of Saints Luke & Margaret, 40 Brighton Ave. 8PM. Show runs through Dec. 8. \$8, \$7 students/senior citizens. Info: 776-9474.

Boston — "Working" presented by the Newbury Street Theater; 565 Boylston St., Copley Square. Play continues through Dec. 15. 8PM. \$5. Reservations: 437-0517.

Cambridge — "Beirut: On a Clear Day You Can See Peace," a Boston premiere; Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8PM. 15. Info: 497-9180 or 354-7001.

Boston — Illusions: An Evening of Mime & Magic performed by Jim Vetter; Actor's Institute, 731 Harrison Ave. 8PM. \$4. Info: 267-5900.

2 sunday

Boston — Dignity/Boston Mass of Celebration; Arlington Street Church, corner of Boylston & Arlington Sts. 5:30PM. All welcome.

Boston — Public pledge of resistance to U.S. invasion of Central America. 3PM, St. Paul's Cathedral, Tremont St. March to new detention center for illegal aliens, 4PM. Info: 354-0008.

Boston — "Woman's Talk Show," WRBB radio, 104.9FM, 6-7PM. Guests: Debra Chasnoff and Kim Klausner, producers of the film "Choosing Children."

Boston — "AIDS in Massachusetts" conference sponsored by the Governor's Task Force on AIDS and the Mass. Dept. of Public Health; 10AM-1PM, Public Health Council Room, 150 Tremont St. Free and open to all.

Boston — Leaderless support/social group for lesbians over 30. Info: 738-4260.

4 tuesday

Cambridge — "Lesbian Mainstream Politics in the '80s," with Martha Jones of BLGPA; 1151 Mass. Ave., Old Cambridge Baptist Church. 8PM. \$1 donation. Info: 661-3633.

Boston — Racism and Classism discussion sponsored by Boston Bisexual Women's Network. 7PM, Somewhere Else, 295 Franklin St. Free and open to all.

5 wednesday

Boston — Lesbian/Gay Community Networking Breakfast, 8AM at Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Ave. Sponsored by Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance and Mass. Gay Political Caucus. All are welcome.

Boston — 9to5's third Celebrity Auction and Cocktail Party; Institute for Contemporary Art, 955 Boylston St. 6-9:30PM. \$15, \$10 9to5 members. Info: 423-3253.

Boston — Book Party for Essentially Women: A Book of Poems & Drawings by 10 Boston-Area Women; Church of the Covenant. Newbury & Arlington Sts. 7:30PM. \$2.

Boston — Fundraiser party for Central America Referendum Campaign, Artists Call, and Medical Aid to Nicaragua; the 1270, 1270 Boylston St. 9PM-1AM. \$5 in advance, \$6 at door. Info: 227-7335.

6 thursday

Brockton — Lesbian lunchtime group meeting. 12 noon. Info: Judy, 542-6362.

Boston — Gay Community News always needs help on production night when articles are proofread and pasted up. If you've done proofreading or layout and would like to volunteer, stop by 167 Tremont St. 5th Floor (5-8pm for proofing, 7:30-11pm for layout). Come help out GCN and read tomorrow's news today.

Bridgewater — South Shore Gay & Lesbian Alliance social group. 7:30PM. Info: 293-5183 or write, S.S.G.L.A., P.O. Box 712, Bridgewater 02324.

Boston — "On Strike At Yale," a forum on the current clerical & technical workers' strike at Yale; 58 Berkeley St., 7:30PM. \$2. Info: 628-6585.



Tom Reeves

7 friday

Cambridge — Black Rose Lecture: "Controversial Sex," with Tom Reeves (man-boy love); Beryl Hofstein (lesbian S/M), Ann Kotell (monogamy), & Pete Wilson (gay promiscuity); MIT, Building 9, rm. 150, 105 Mass. Ave. 8PM. Info: 492-6259.

Boston — The Long Light: Voices of Aging performed by the Boston Theater Group; Bates Hall, Church of the Covenant, 67 Newbury St. 8PM. \$5. Also showing Saturday at 8PM & Sunday at 3PM until Dec. 16. Info: 288-3085.

Medford — Tufts Lesbian/Gay Community Dance Curtis Hall, Tufts Univ. 9:30PM-1AM. Info: 628-2818.

Boston — GCN VOLUNTEER NIGHT!!! Come help send out the paper to our subscribers. Refreshments and good times. Come anytime after 6PM to 167 Tremont Street, 5th Floor (near Boylston and Park Street "T" stops). If the door is locked, buzz us on the GCN intercom located outside the front door.

8 saturday

Northampton — Casselberry-Dupree with Toshi Reagon and the Agitones. Susan Freundlich, sign interpreter. 8PM, Calvin Theater. \$7 general admission, \$9 contributing, \$5 under 14/over 60. Info: 412-584-2637.

Cambridge — Lesbian Singles Rap. Daughters of Bilitis, 1151 Mass. Ave., Old Cambridge Baptist Church. 8PM. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

Somerville — "Playing On An Impulse" with Judy Sloan; Sneakers, 55 Chester St. (below Barnaby's), Davis Square. 8:30PM. \$3.

Boston — Lesbian Lawyers meeting. Info: GLAD, 426-1350.

Boston — "Something About the Women," interview with directors of the film, "Choosing Children"; WMFO 91.5 FM. 11AM.

Boston — "Choosing Children," a film on lesbians becoming parents. BU Morse Auditorium, 602 Comm. Ave. 8PM. \$5 in advance, \$6 at the door. Party with filmmakers to follow. Info: 776-6759.

Notes

'dentity crisis and the nature and purpose of the universe.

By Christopher Durang. Directed by Richard Freeman. With Terri Epp, Margaret Ann Brady, Michael Goodson, Chloe J. Leamon, David Frutkoff, Sophie Parker. At The New Ehrlich. Running through December 15.

For the second time this theater season, Boston has the chance to view the work of playwright Christopher Durang. And as in *Sister Mary Ignatius...* the question is still the same: "Why does God permit evil in the world?" But where his ecclesiastical romp examined the ways — either belief or non-belief — people coped with the problem, these two one-acts (actually, a long one-act and a curtain raiser) expose, one might even say reveal in, the random and illogical evil that runs rampant in people's lives.

'Dentity Crisis (The "I" is missing) is really a throw-away that looks at the skewered world of Jane (Terri Epp) whose family seems intent on driving her crazier than she may be already. Her mother insists on being the inventor of cheese and banana bread. Her brother, father and grandfather all seem to be the same person and her therapist (and his wife) keep on having sex changes. The slightness of the play is obscured by the flashy production which makes wonderful use of slides and projections (although this does entail performing much of the play in semi-darkness). And, although it is peppered with some funny lines, there is not much here. The acting is commendable, however, especially Margaret Brady's as the wacko mother and Russell R. Greene's as the protean brother/father/grandfather.

If the Catholic Church was annoyed about *Sister Mary Ignatius*, Congress may well enact the Family Protection Act against *The Nature and Purpose of the Universe*. It is an ordinary week in the ordinary life of an ordinary American family. Eleanor Mann (Sophie Parker) prays to God to let her vacuum cleaner work while she is abused, maled, and attacked by her husband Steve (David Frutkoff), a fanatical Catholic; and her sons Donald (James Russo), a drug addict, pusher and pimp; Gary (Robert Watson), a flaming queen; and Andy (Ken Koppel), who has suffered genital mutilation at the blades of a reaper. In the midst of this come Ronald (Michael Goodson) and Elaine (Chloe Leamon) — agents of God — who are intent on making Eleanor's life much worse than it is.

What at first seems like an absurdist attack on misogyny quickly turns sour, as it becomes apparent that the playwright has no real point of view about the evils he is portraying. There is no responsibility assigned to any of the characters; it could as well be a man being abused by a group of women; and while we are being told that this evil exists, we are never invited (or even given an inkling) that there is a specific cause or cure.

By taking real-life situations — or human conditions — and shaking them helter-skelter into an abstract of intellectual pessimism, the play trivializes and offends. Life is horrible so everything is a joke, everything is pointless. There is no need for a play to be doctrinaire or preachy (those are usually terrible), but there does have to be a respect for both the characters and their humanity for any work of art to reach an audience. *The Nature and Purpose of the Universe* is concerned with the terror and pity of human existence. It manages, however, to incite cheap ridicule. As it stands now, *The Nature and Purpose of the Universe* feels ill-natured and purposeless.

— Michael Bronski



Sabia

Dorchester — Concert for Justice & Peace in El Salvador with Roy Brown, "Sabia," Armando Martinez, "Lactamazi," & Jose Masso; Strand Theater, 543 Columbia Rd. 7:30PM. \$9. Info: 661-0202.

Milford — Tri-County Association discussion group: "The Continuing Process of Coming Out." Info: 376-8145.

Boston — The Cle Douglas Dance Theater presents jazz, modern and afro dance works; AAMARP, 11 Leon St. 8PM.

Boston — "Up On the Roof" presented by New Ehrlich Theater, Boston Center for the Arts, 539 Tremont St. 8PM. \$3. Info: 482-6316. Also playing Dec. 3.

3 monday

Boston — New Women's Chorus auditions. UMass/Downtown, 100 Arlington St., 6th floor. 6:30PM.

Boston — Bright Morning Star performance sponsored by Mobilization for Survival; Morse Aud., 602 Commonwealth Ave. 8PM. \$5 in advance, \$6 at door. Info: 354-8807.

Cambridge — Dr. Benjamin Spock and Rev. Carter Haywood will discuss the tensions in Central America and more. 1st Congregational Church, Garden St. 7:30PM. \$5 to benefit Nicaraguan women's hospital. Info: Madre, 522-7884.

Boston — "Travel Notes of a Small-Town Colored Girl" by Kate Rushin. 3:30PM; Trustman Art Gallery, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway. Free and open to all. Info: Afro-American Studies Program, 738-3105.

South Boston — "Harvey," presented by the S.O.B.E.T. Players; Tynan Community School, 4th & K Sts. 7PM. \$5 at door, \$4 in advance, \$3 senior citizens.

Calendar compiled by Miranda Kolbe

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